

# Lockdowns Violate the Torah

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On March 17, 2020 I published an article called [The Torah Temima on Plagues](#). At the time I understood that the redemption process was rapidly unfolding, but I was still in the dark about so much that is clear today. It takes time for people to realize that everything their government is doing in response to an “emergency” is intended to harm them, and I was no exception.

Israel had placed its unsuspecting population under house arrest for the first time, and we believed it was to prevent a plague from ravaging us. The Gemara in Bava Kama (60B) came to mind, which teaches that in a time of plague one should stay inside. This certainly seemed to mesh with the idea of a temporary “lockdown” until the plague could run its course.

Of course, we now know that the plague wasn't really a plague (certainly not [how halacha defines one](#), even if all those “covid” deaths were really as advertised), and the lockdowns were never about protecting people's health. Furthermore, even if there were a real plague, nowhere does the Torah or our tradition indicate that the government should force people to stay inside. The risk/benefit assessment of leaving one's home for any reason is always left to the individual, even as the Gemara advises people to generally stay indoors.

This point must be emphasized. Jewish law does not grant the government the power to restrict people's movements during a plague, neither to protect them nor for “the public good”. Those who wish to enter the public domain know that others have the same privilege, and this comes with certain risks for everyone. Each individual may take personal precautions as they see fit, or avoid the public domain if they prefer. No one has the right to ban anyone from the public domain because they are afraid of other people exercising their God-given right to be there; they can only ban themselves. (Also see [Public Safety in the Torah](#).)

Indeed, the Gemara that people take out of context to support government-imposed lockdowns refutes their logic on the very same page. One Baraysa teaches that when there is a plague in the city, one should not walk in the middle of the road, because the Angel of Death is walking there; since he has been

given permission to go out, he goes out openly. In a time of peace, one should not walk on the side of the road, because then the Angel of Death must skulk around.

Leaving aside scientific corroboration or lack thereof, this teaching clearly indicates that the previous teaching – to stay indoors during a time of plague – is a general recommendation, not an ironclad rule. People were still expected to go about in the streets, and even travel between cities, albeit with precautions to avoid bumping into the Angel of Death.

The next Baraysa is even more striking. It states as follows: “If there is a plague in the city, an individual should not go to the synagogue, because the Angel of Death deposits his instruments there. However, this is only true if there are not children learning there or ten men praying there.”

There are surely deep spiritual lessons here, but the primary message could not be more straightforward. Not only are people supposed to continue to assemble to pray and study Torah during a time of plague, such assemblies offer special protection! The Angel of Death takes up residence in the synagogue specifically when the people abandon it.

Closing shuls and yeshivos during a plague is the worst possible response according to the Gemara. They should be filled around the clock with people praying and children studying Torah.

I know of one shul in Beit Shemesh, most likely one of many, in which the members asked the rabbi a tragic question before Yom Kippur. The shul required everyone to wear a mask and was extremely strict about it. Both the mouth and nose had to be completely covered at all times, no sneaking in some unobstructed breaths whatsoever! However, many of the members were concerned about wearing the mask for so many hours while fasting.

Did they ask if they could relax their strict masking requirements for the most important prayers of the year? No.

They asked if they could hasten the prayers.

The rabbi gave his blessing.

The Master of the Universe was sitting on His throne that day, while these Jews with faces covered petitioned Him for forgiveness, protection, and life. They rushed through this petition, because they were

afraid they would get sick and die if they uncovered their faces even momentarily. God's house, where they were begging Him for life, was full of deadly diseases.

“God, please grant us life, but we have to hurry and get out of here, or we might die.”

Was this gathering a treacherous balancing act like sneaking in a prayer under the shadow of the Nazis or the KGB? No. It was paranoia and slavish obedience to godless “health” authorities, concretized as a holy sacrifice, more life-preserving than anything they believed their prayers to God would really do for them. Unreligious Zionism.

If the threat of baring one's *Tzelem Elokim* in shul on Yom Kippur were truly clear and present, all the devout Jews throughout Israel would have readily taken the necessary precautions. That was far from the case. Clearly, this was more about conforming to social expectations than anything to do with science or Torah.

The Torah is quite clear about this, for those who are unwilling to subvert it to please the godless ones. If there is a plague in the city, public prayers and Torah study keep the Angel of Death at bay. It is no wonder that the godless ones – and their Erev Rav skills – insist that just the opposite is true.

Lockdowns are against the Torah; entering the public domain is a sacrosanct personal right.

Restricting access to shuls and yeshivos flies in the face of the Gemara, which encourages public prayer and Torah study to continue unabated during times of plague – all the more so when it isn't a plague as defined by halacha.

Religious Jews who are truly religious, God-fearing people must take guidance from the Torah and fight for the Torah's position. They must educate the “health” authorities and stand firm for what is true. If the “health” authorities refuse to accept the truth, they must be replaced, period.

This is our religious duty. In the merit of petitioning Hashem properly, together, without fear of illness or one another, He will surely bless us with life. That is the way of the Torah, the tree of life for all who hold fast to it.

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I prefer natural immunity to artificial immunity, and natural intelligence to artificial intelligence.